

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

January 11, 2021

LOCATION: Due to COVID-19 this meeting was held electronically.

**Committee Members Present: Chair Deb Barber, Reva Chamblis, Christopher Ferguson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran**

**Committee Members Absent: Molly Cummings, Kris Fredson**

**TAAC Liaison Present:**

### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. on Monday, January 11, 2021.

### AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Gonzalez to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2020 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

### TAAC REPORT

There was no report.

### METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Nick Thompson reported:

#### CARES 2

Tonight you will be asked to concur with the TAB recommendation to award over \$214M in federal funds to transportation projects across the region. The federal funds are provided to our region as part of distribution to large MPOs. With the latest round of COVID relief, our region will have received more federal dollars for transportation projects. We anticipate over \$50M in new federal funds will be allocated to our region for TAB and the Council to distribute. These new funds are separate from the Transit funding the Council will received. In the first COVID relief package last spring there were transit operating funds but no infrastructure funding like this \$50M. At this point we do not have full details on this funding and any restrictions.

#### COVID update

We are working with Metro Transit on coordination of vaccine for public transit workers, hopefully with it starting later this month. In our contracted services group and the suburban transit providers there are nearly 2000 employees who will qualify to receive the vaccine as part of group 1B roll out. We are still waiting for details on the number of vaccines and when they will be available so we can establish a process to get the public transit workers quickly vaccinated.

We are continuing with a process saturation testing of contracted employees to gain an understanding of level of community spread. Testing is being done by the contractors at their site and will continue through this week. Results are still pending for many of the tests administered recently. Last week we had 9 positive tests, several of which were detected in the on-site testing protocol.

#### Premium on-demand

Lastly, this week we are taking another step towards our new premium on-demand Taxi and Lyft service roll out for Metro Mobility customers. We officially are beginning the taxi roll-out with testing done by a select group of Metro Mobility customers and then if successful will roll out to all customers. We are not quite ready to start the service with Lyft but will start the taxi service when ready.

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:

#### COVID Update

We've had a total of 348 employees diagnosed with COVID from March through yesterday. This figure includes 31 new cases since the committee last met on December 14 through yesterday. Thankfully, we saw about half as many cases in December as we experienced in November. Currently, we are not experiencing any operational impacts due to employees having COVID or needing to quarantine. Vaccinations for Metro Transit employees. The next phases of vaccine distribution will likely begin in early February. The Minnesota Department of Health is determining which frontline workers will be included in a three-phase distribution plan. The Council is advocating that transit, wastewater, and Metro HRA frontline staff be included in the second phase. Distribution plans from the Minnesota Department of Health should be available soon. At this time, the vaccine will not be required as a condition of employment. However, receiving the vaccine is highly encouraged.

#### Ridership

Ridership remains down just over 60 percent compared to pre-pandemic levels. From December 28, 2020 to January 3, 2021 = total system was down 62%

1. Bus down 62%
2. Blue Line LRT down 65%
3. Green Line LRT down 61%
4. Northstar down 96%

#### Continued efforts to improve mask compliance

Our police department and marketing department are continuing efforts to improve mask compliance on our system. On light rail, we were observing over 75% compliance during the last week of December when we have sampled compliance. Marketing continues to push the mask compliance messages via on board audio and scrolling messages, static signage, and regular social media posts. Last week we posted a video on the Metro Transit blog "Rider's Almanac" that featured operators from Metro Transit and other transit agencies to help personalize the message of why wearing masks on transit is important.

#### Federal relief funds

Since the last committee meeting, the federal government passed COVID relief legislation that includes additional funding for transit. The COVID relief bill signed into law in late December includes \$14 billion for transit nationwide. Today the FTA released the allocations, and our region is set to receive \$185.9 million. We are grateful for this significant infusion of funds because we are facing significant challenges in funding our operations and capital maintenance needs. We just received this information today, and we are still in the process of working with the Governor's office on his budget recommendations. I anticipate we will have more information in the coming weeks about how this regional total will be allocated to address our capital and operating funding needs across bus, rail, and Metro Mobility.

Real time cameras on light rail vehicles fully installed

One non-COVID update – all 91 light rail vehicles now have the new real-time cameras installed and operating. As I've talked with this committee about before, real-time video capability on our trains is one tool we are using to increase our presence on vehicles. These cameras enable us to more effectively monitor and respond to conditions on our vehicles. I want to acknowledge and thank all the great work by Rail staff to get these cameras installed and running.

Chamblis commented on the importance of the real-time cameras. Chair Barber asked about advertising regarding the real-time cameras. Kooistra said communication is being discussed.

**BUSINESS**

**Consent Items:**

Motion was made by Sterner, seconded by Zeran and carried, to approve the following consent items:

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber  
Nay: 0  
Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

1. **2021-14 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: MN 316 Reconstruction

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to reduce the length, increase the cost, and change the scope of MnDOT's mill-and-overlay project on Minnesota Highway 316 (Red Wing Blvd) in Dakota County.

2. **2021-15 SW:** 2021-2024 TIP Amendment for MnDOT: US 10 Reconstruction

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to extend the length, increase the cost, and change the scope of MnDOT's reconstruction project on US Highway 10 in Elk River.

**Non-Consent Items:**

1. **2021-10:** Review of Metropolitan Airports Commission 2021-2027 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Russ Owen presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Sterner:  
That the Metropolitan Council:

- 1) Find that the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) had an adequate public participation process for the development and review of its 2021-2027 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), including preparation of an assessment of environmental effects (AOEE) for 2021 projects with potential environmental effects.
- 2) Find that the 2021 CIP projects are in conformance with the region's Aviation System Plan and consistent with Council policy.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber  
Nay: 0  
Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**2. 2021-16 SW: Transit Link Anoka-Hennepin Contract**

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Project Administrator Sheila Williams presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Chamblis:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contracts with Anoka County and Transit Team, Inc., to provide Transit Link services for a total procurement value not to exceed \$16,522,045 over a term of five years.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**3. 2021-12: 2020 Regional Solicitation Funding Decision**

Metropolitan Transportation Services Highway Planning & TAB/TAC Process Manager Steve Peterson presented this item. Chamblis and Chair Barber expressed thanks for the work put into the Regional Solicitation.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to include \$214 million in federal funding to 56 projects evaluated through the Regional Solicitation in the Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**4. 2021-13: 2020 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Solicitation Funding Decision**

Metropolitan Transportation Services Highway Planning & TAB/TAC Process Manager Steve Peterson presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to include \$33.2 million in federal funding to 26 projects evaluated through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Solicitation in the Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**5. 2021-6: Inver Grove Heights Surplus Land Sale, Reference #19R034**

Metro Transit Real Estate and Asset Management Program Manager Claudius Toussaint presented this item. Chamblis asked for specifics about an adjacent building.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Gonzalez:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council) authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a quit claim deed with 2JM, LLC in the amount of \$650,000 for a surplus parcel of land.

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Chair Barber stated this item could proceed as Consent to Council.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**6. 2021-7: 2020 Bus Passenger Waiting Shelters, Contract 20P061**

Metro Transit Principal Project Coordinator Paul Lamb presented this item. Chamblis asked for an account of recent installations of shelters. Lamb said there is an annual prioritizations of thirty boardings or more a day.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Zeran:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes award and execution of contract 20P061 with Brasco International in the amount not to exceed \$523,700.00.

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Chair Barber stated this item could proceed as Consent to Council.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**7. 2021-8: Metro Transit Mobile Application - Contract 20P101**

Metro Transit Senior Market Development Specialist Adam Mehl presented this item. There were no questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Sterner:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with Token Transit, Inc., to develop and host a Metro Transit mobile application for a total procurement value not to exceed \$912,000, over a term of five years.

Motion carried. Hearing no objection, Chair Barber stated this item could proceed as Consent to Council.

Aye: 6 Chamblis, Ferguson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran, Barber

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Cummings, Fredson

**INFORMATION**

1. There were no information items on the agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Jenna Ernst  
Recording Secretary